

Talent Development Suggested Summer Reading List 2013

Parents and Students,

This list is not by any means a comprehensive list, however, these are fun summer reads that provide the appropriate challenge to gifted readers. The ages listed are merely suggestions based on librarians, other teachers, and Common Sense Media.org. Keep in mind that some subject matter may be inappropriate for certain age levels. I recommend reading any questionable books (marked with an asterisk*) prior to your child reading them to determine the appropriateness of each novel. In addition, you may also visit commonsensemedia.org for parent ratings of books, movies and TV shows. Have a great summer and happy reading!! ☺

Rising 6th graders

- *Bartimaeus : Amulet of Samarkand* by Jonathan Stroud. Lexile: 800. Series. A rising young magician becomes caught in a web of magical espionage, murder and rebellion with the help of a djinni named Bartimaeus.
- *Boy in the Striped Pajamas** by John Boyne. Lexile: 1080. This book portrays Nazi Germany from the point of view of two small boys, one a prisoner, the other the son of the commandant of the prisoner camp. Suggested for more mature students who have a prior knowledge of the Holocaust.
- *Countdown* by Deborah Wiles. Lexile: 800. Series. A wonderful documentary novel filled with photographs and memorabilia from the mid-60's. This is a powerful picture of the two weeks known as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the nuclear fear that existed during the Cold War during the 1960's. Students in this grade may have better background knowledge of the history to comprehend this novel.
- *The Shadow Project* by Herbie Brennan. Lexile: 730. Series. Danny Lipman is a young thief who stumbles upon an operation he doesn't immediately understand. He soon learns the project is a joint MI6/CIA venture that makes use of teen operatives as spies. Danny is brought in to rescue Opal, the director's daughter. Full of action and suspense.
- *Evil Genius* by Catherine Jinks. Lexile: 720. Series. A child prodigy who is being trained to be a master criminal. This is an entertaining and nature series that has several themes represented that make it a read for fifth grade and up. Similar to the Artemis Fowl series.
- *Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* by Jacqueline Kelly. Lexile: 830. Newbery Honor book 2009. A wonderful book with a very bright girl who learns about love from her brothers and sisters and the natural world from her reclusive grandfather. There is a realistic portrayal of scientific observation of nature leading to an important discovery.
- *Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins. Lexile: 810. Series. In a not-too-distant future, the USA has collapsed to be replaced by Panem, a country divided into the Capitol and 12 districts. Each year, two young representatives from each district are selected by lottery to participate in The Hunger Games. Part entertainment, part brutal intimidation of the subjugated districts, the televised games are broadcasted throughout Panem as the 24 participants are forced to eliminate their competitors, literally, with all citizens required to watch. Due to strong themes and mature content, I recommend parents read the series first to determine appropriateness for your child.

- *Divergent** by Veronica Roth, Lexile: HL700L. Series. In a future Chicago, 16-year-old Beatrice must choose among five predetermined factions to define her identity for the rest of her life, a decision made more difficult when she discovers that she is an anomaly who does not fit into any one group. Due to strong themes and mature content, I recommend parents read the series first to determine appropriateness for your child.
- *Delirium** by Lauren Oliver, Lexile: 920L. Series. Lena looks forward to receiving the government-mandated cure that prevents the delirium of love and leads to a safe, happy life, until she falls in love days before her 18th birthday and her treatment. The plot contains violence. Due to strong themes and mature content, I recommend parents read the series first to determine appropriateness for your child.
- *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson. Lexile: 700. Series. Book one in the Maximum Ride series. It's a strong fantasy series with lots of action.
- *Millicent Min, Girl Genius* by Lisa Yee. Lexile: 800. Using a journal format, 11-year-old child prodigy Millicent Min records her struggles to learn to play volleyball, tutor her enemy, deal with her grandmother's departure and make friends over the course of a tumultuous summer.
- *Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine. Lexile: 630. National Book Award YPL winner 2010. 10-year-old Caitlin has Asperger's Syndrome. She is struggling to understand and reach closure after a tragedy affects both her family and the whole community. (Despite the low Lexile rating, I didn't feel the topics introduced here were appropriate for younger readers – autism, school shooting.)
- *Savvy* by Ingrid Law. Lexile: 1070. Series. Newbery Honor winner 2008. The adventures of Mibs Beaumont, whose 13th birthday has revealed her "savvy" – a magical power unique to each member of her family – just as her father is injured in a terrible accident. This would interest students who enjoy the *Harry Potter* or *Charlie Bone* series.
- *Stormbreaker* by Anthony Horowitz..Lexile: 670. Series. Spy series that centers on British Intelligence.
- *Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer* by John Grisham. Lexile: 790. A lawyer's son, Theodore Boone, knows every judge, police officer, and court clerk in the small town of Strattenburg. He finds himself involved in a murder trial because of knowledge he might have about the killer.
- *Young Samurai: the Way of the Dragon* by Chris Bradford. Lexile: 890. Series. Action-packed adventure for students interested in the ancient Samurai.
- *Unwanted*s by Lisa McMann. Lexile: 880L. When Alex finds out he is Unwanted, he expects to die. That is the way of the people of Quill. Each year, all the thirteen-year-olds are labeled as Wanted, Necessary, or Unwanted. Wanted get more schooling and train to join the Quillitary. Necessaries keep the farms running. Unwanted are set for elimination. It's hard for Alex to leave behind his twin, Aaron, a Wanted, but he makes peace with his fate, until he discovers that instead of a death farm, what awaits him is a magical place called Artim . There, Alex and his fellow Unwanted are encouraged to cultivate their creative abilities and use them magically.
- *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis. Lexile: 950. Newbery Winner 1999. Corretta Scott King Awar 1999. Classic tale filled with humor and emotion as a young orphan chases the dream of finding his father. His trials include terrible foster homes and finding out what the items in his suitcase will tell him about his dad.
- *The Danger Box* by Blue Balliet. AR: 5.0, Lexile: 900. In small town Michigan, 12-year-old Zoomy and his new friend Lorrol investigate the journal found inside a mysterious box and find family secrets and a more valuable treasure, while a dangerous stranger watches and waits.
- *Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* by Jacqueline Kelly. AR: 5.3, Lexile: 830. Newbery Honor book 2009. A wonderful book with a very bright girl who learns about love from her brothers and sisters and the natural world from her reclusive grandfather. There is a realistic portrayal of scientific observation of nature leading to an important discovery.